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R 171546Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4656
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 3866
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 2338
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 1366
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0775
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1998
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 6067
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 4303
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 2246
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 000253

SIPDIS

STATE FOR R/MR, I/PP, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA

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TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [EFIN](#) [CI](#)

SUBJECT: CHILE MEDIA REPORT - MARCH 17

Leading Stories

1. Concerns have been raised over the appointment of a non-elected PPD official to fill the Chamber of Deputy seat vacated by Congresswoman Toha, who joined the Bachelet cabinet as press spokesperson. This has triggered debate about the replacement process and calls for it to be reviewed. Dailies also reported the plebiscite held in the community of Vitacura on proposed municipal development projects has triggered requests for plebiscites in other communities nationwide.

U.S.-Related News

2. A New York Times article on Quillagua, "the driest town in the world," in northern Chile, highlighted how water rights in Chile are privately-owned. These rights are bought and sold as any other goods in a process under which the government has little control (El Mercurio, conservative, influential newspaper-of-record, circ. 129,000, 3/17).

3. Attorney Pablo Ruiz-Tagle, Executive Director of "Oceanos Azules" (Blue oceans) will attend a seminar in Virginia organized by Microsoft, which will gather influential international leaders to discuss public policy on an array of issues, including the environment. Ruiz- Tagle is the spokesperson for presidential candidate Eduardo Frei's political agenda (La Tercera, 3/17).

Chile- Peru

4. Foreign Affairs Minister Mariano Fernandez reiterated Chile's position on Peru's maritime border claim at The Hague: "the maritime border with Peru is determined by the legal border" that already exists between the two countries (La Tercera, 3/17).

SIMONS